



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

**Solid Waste Division**

# TALES FROM THE WASTE-LESS LAND

Master Recycler Composter (MRC) Newsletter

Winter 2003

## WELCOME TO A NEW YEAR!!

THANK YOU for making 2002 such a highly successful year! You collectively staffed over 200 recorded events and made thousands of contacts! We hope all of you had as much fun as we did educating residents on how to use their own compost bins, teaching the importance of recycling in the home, sharing resource conservation tips and facilitating a connection between the King County Solid Waste Division and the general public. We couldn't have done it without



you, so we extend a warm THANK YOU to all!

As always, we welcome your ideas for improvements to the 2003 MRC program. Your voice is important because we want to make sure you enjoy your outreach experiences as much as possible. You are also on the front lines and know best what works well and what might need to change. Please share your ideas – call the MRC Hotline (206-343-8505) or email MRC Project Manager, Karen May, at [karen.may@metrokc.gov](mailto:karen.may@metrokc.gov).

Thank you - we look forward to working with you all again in 2003!

### 2002 ADVANCED TRAINING A SUCCESS!

Early last fall, 18 MRCs participated in the annual advanced training event titled "Beyond Soils 101: Biosolids, Manure Composting, and Soil Building." The 13-hour training included:

- Tour of West Point Treatment Plant
- Presentation on Biosolids
- Tour of Bellevue Demo Garden with Master Gardeners
- Manure Composting Presentation and Farm Tour

- Advanced Soils Talk with Craig Cogger

Your fellow MRCs ranked each portion of the training highly and were inspired by the enthusiasm that was generated amongst their recycling comrades. The great discussion during the workshops lead to many ideas for educational opportunities to be offered in 2003 - stay tuned for a calendar of upcoming events!

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# WASTE-FREE, EVERY DAY!

**Y**ou've heard about King County's Waste Free Holiday Program -- participating local businesses offer discounts on experiences from the day after Thanksgiving through the end of the year. However, you can extend the concept year round by giving the gift of "experiences instead of stuff" to your family, friends, or co-workers on other traditional gift-giving occasions throughout the year. Here's the King County website that offers up alternative ideas:



<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/WasteFreeHolidays/wfhyear.htm>

## **Falaah Jones (Class #24)**

suggests the following creative resource conservation tips that can be used for birthdays, anniversaries or anytime you want to share a waste-less gift with somebody special. Make it a New Year's resolution to continue waste-free giving throughout 2003!

- Inflate plastic bags (e.g. bread or produce bags) and use as packing around items for mailing
- Wrap presents in towels or t-shirts or colored newspaper comic sections
- Make a treasure hunt out of gift giving: hide presents instead

of wrapping them

- Give experiences or chore or activity coupons as gifts, complete with a "no complaint" warranty!
- Offer to build a worm bin or to turn a friend's compost
- Give a worm bin kit to a gardening friend or child
- Give bag(s) of leaves or homemade compost
- Give reusable cloth items such as napkins, a lunch bag, organic cotton t-shirts, socks, etc.
- Give a plant that you have grown yourself and include a story or history about it
- Bake something and include the recipe and/or a story about it
- Teach someone a skill (computer, knitting, sewing, car or home repair projects)
- Share your time

## **NEW PILOT FACTORIA HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) STORAGE LOCKER IS OPEN!**

**T**he Bellevue-Factoria pilot hazardous waste storage locker opened in September 2002 at the Factoria Transfer Station. This service is available to all residents of King County. It offers increased availability of household hazardous waste disposal service for Eastside residents.

The Factoria Transfer Station is located at 13800 SE 32nd Street in Bellevue. This facility accepts the same materials that are collected at the Wastemobile (used paint, motor oil, pesticides and more). The site is open

Thursday - Sunday from 9am to 5pm, except on holidays. The total volume of waste per customer may not exceed 30 gallons. If you have more than 30 gallons of waste at any one time, please call the Hazards Line at (206) 296-4692 to find out about other disposal options.

For more information on the new Factoria HHW facility or on HHW collection in general, please visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/hazwaste/wastemobile/hazsites/factoria.html>.

## **DISPLAYS ON THE WEB SITE!**

**H**ave you always wondered exactly what types of displays the MRC program has to offer? Do you know the range of topics that displays cover? Are you looking for hands-on representation to accompany a future talk on recycling in King County? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are in luck! A new page - with pictures - has been added to the volunteer Web site that describes the various displays available for you to use at events. Please call the MRC Hotline if you need help logging on to the site or if you would like to borrow a display.

# FREE KIT - TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT SALMON FROM PESTICIDES!

The following is adapted from an article by Angela Storey, Washington Toxics Coalition.

Virtually every stream, lake, and river in the Northwest that has been tested is contaminated with pesticides. Pesticide contamination, including herbicides, insecticides, and other pest control chemicals, can kill salmon directly or cause damage that significantly reduces their chances of survival. Pesticides also pose a threat to people (particularly to children's health) and pets.

You can take action today to protect people, pets and salmon from pesticide exposure!

A new action kit is available to help you get pesticides out of your community. The kit provides resources for communities to work for city or county adoption of policies restricting use of hazardous pesticides and emphasizing pest prevention. Issaquah Environmental Council

is a member of the regional Clean Water for Salmon Network, supporting pesticide-free streams to aid in salmon recovery across the northwest.

Most cities and counties in the Northwest use pesticides in their parks, roadside vegetation management, municipal building and grounds, and other properties. But it doesn't have to be that way! Cities and counties are in a unique position to not only reduce their own use of harmful pesticides, but also serve as a model for their citizens and other municipalities.

With information, resources, and organizing assistance, this is your first step in protecting salmon, people and pets in your community from pesticides! For copies of the kit or more information, contact:

Angela Storey, Washington Toxics Coalition, 206-632-1545 ext. 11, [astorey@watoxics.org](mailto:astorey@watoxics.org), or [www.watoxics.org](http://www.watoxics.org)

Added note from Annette Frahm, Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County:

Seattle and King County have dramatically reduced pesticide use by their groundskeepers, as have some of the suburban cities. Insecticides are rarely used; mostly herbicides. In Seattle and King County, the primary pesticide used is Roundup, which is somewhat less toxic than the alternatives. A tier system is used that aims to reduce the use of the more hazardous pesticides. Seattle and King County have adopted an integrated pest management policy that could be a model for other local governments. [see language on the City of Seattle web site: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/environment/pesticides.htm> and King County IPM web site: <http://www.metrokc.gov/hazwaste/ipm>]. We are hoping to encourage more suburban cities to adopt an integrated pest management approach to groundskeeping and thereby reduce their pesticide use. Citizens and environmental groups can be a great ally in this effort!



## SPRING IS NOT THAT FAR AWAY... WHAT IS A NORTHWEST NATURAL YARD?

Five local agencies have come together to coordinate on natural yard care messages. The group's objectives are to develop key yard care messages that are clear and consistent and can generate high recognition and consumer acceptance.

The key messages are not new—they are a composite of all the messages that different agencies have used for years. They focus on five topics: soil, water, plants, pests and lawns. The messages are:

- Build healthy soil
- Plant right for your site
- Practice smart watering

- Think twice before using pesticides
- Practice natural lawn care

The first times you'll see these together and promoted as the key messages of a Natural Yard Care program will be in a brochure to be published in early 2003 and distributed at the 2003 Flower and Garden Show in the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks and WSU-Cooperative Extension booths. We'll keep you posted as to the MRC's role in relaying these messages. Keep your eyes peeled!

The participating agencies are: the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Seattle Public Utilities, City of Bellevue, WSU Extension/King County and the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County.



## DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

It's time for the much-anticipated annual King County winter events! Sign up now for the following Bellevue Home Show and Seattle Home Show shifts!

**Bellevue Home Show**, January 24-26 – Help visitors learn about resource conservation at the Built Green booth, consisting of a "Green Kitchen" that features energy efficient appliances and materials made with recycled content. In addition, a new Natural Yard Care booklet will be distributed. Contact Gemma Alexandra at 206-296-4409 or the MRC website to sign up for any of these shifts:

- Saturday, January 25, 2:00-6:00 PM or 6:30-9:00 PM
- Sunday, January 26, 2:00-6:00 PM

**Seattle Home Show**, February 15-23 -Sponsored by King County and the City of Seattle. Part of the SWD's exhibit will be dedicated to promoting natural yard care and distributing a new Natural Yard Care booklet. Contact Kris Beatty at 206-296-3740 or the MRC website to sign up for any of these shifts:

Saturdays (Feb 15th and 22nd):

- 1:30 PM - 5:30 PM
- 5:15 PM - 9:00 PM

Sundays (Feb 16th and 23rd):

- 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
- 3:15 PM - 6:00 PM

Monday (Feb 17th):

- 9:45 AM - 1:30 PM
- 1:15 PM - 5:00 PM
- 4:45 PM - 8:30 PM

Tuesday-Thursday (Feb 18th-20th):

- 10:45 AM - 2:00 PM
- 1:45 PM - 5:15 PM
- 5:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Friday (Feb 21st):

- 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM
- 5:45 PM - 9:30 PM

# COMPUTER PERILS

The following article was provided by Ruth Ethelston (MRC Class #1). Thanks, Ruth!

I recently attended the Washington Recycles Day Seminar at the Seattle Center. It was a great event. Lots of local businesses attended. A Seattle dry cleaner told how the business recycles hangers and the plastic cover bags and is starting a program to use reusable bags for drop off laundry and to send out the cleaned items. His customers really like the environmental aspects of recycling. He harped on the fact that he is saving lots of money.

The most interesting session of the day was about how American companies are shipping obsolete computers to China, Vietnam, and the Philippines. The companies are involved in "recycling" computers. A lot of companies are reputable recyclers, but many send computers overseas where they are recycled at great costs

to the environment and health of workers.

The documentary film, "Exporting Harm" was shown at the session. It chronicled the story of a small



town south of Hong Kong, China called Guiya. The film explained how the workers and their home are being poisoned by the toxic residues from the recycling of the computers. The CRTs are broken by hand. This causes lead and

other metals to be released. Much of the plastic is burned producing toxic smoke. The video showed piles of garbage and ash littering the land and piling up by streams and rivers. Most of the water is contaminated with lead at levels 200 times the amount that some American states allow.

It was a very hard film to watch. One you wished you could see and then forget! But it is clear that this is a great problem.

Most U.S. municipalities are banning computers from their landfills, but without restructuring of U.S. laws it seems the impoverished Third World countries' people will be living amongst the toxic remnants of our electronic debris.

If you would like more information on the film or this issue, I recommend the Basel Action Network website <http://www.ban.org>.

## LOCAL COMPUTER RECYCLING

Find out about local computer recycling efforts through the Computer Recovery Network's website - <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/default.shtml>.

The Computer Recovery Network is a list of businesses that have signed an agreement with King

County to recycle broken monitors domestically. However, be advised that there are currently no restrictions on how the recyclers handle the other equipment, so some of it could be exported to other nations. It is important to ask the company what happens to the equipment after you bring it in for recycling. So be sure that

the company gives you a good answer that you feel comfortable with - otherwise, go somewhere else!



# HORSES FOR CLEAN WATER!

**H**orses for Clean Water (HCW) is a program run by horseowners which offers environmentally sensitive horsekeeping education. HCW offers educational materials on topics such as reducing mud, composting horse manure, setting up horse facilities to be chore efficient and naturescaping on horse farms. For more information on HCW visit their website:

[www.HorsesforCleanWater.com](http://www.HorsesforCleanWater.com). Horses for Clean Water will be working with many other agencies to offer the following (FREE!) events:

Workshops for Horse and Livestock Owners - Thursday evenings, Jan. 30th -Feb 20th, 6:30-9pm. Learn livestock management

practices that will help turn your farm into a more useable place for you, your animals and the environment. Less mud, better pastures and good ways to manage manure! Mount Si Senior Center, North Bend, WA. Call the King Conservation District at 206-764-3410 ext.120.

Horse Farm Tour - Saturday, February 15th, 10am - noon. Visit a Fall City horse farm with mudless paddocks

and a new compost bin design! Call the King Conservation District at 206-764-3410 ext 130.

Commercial Stables Workshops - Feb. 26th and 27th. Presentations on mud and manure management techniques to meet the special needs of commercial horse facilities. Renton and Pres-

ton. Contact Greta Cook, WSU Cooperative Extension KC, at [Greta.Cook@METROKC.GOV](mailto:Greta.Cook@METROKC.GOV) or 206-205-3105.

Small Farm Expo - Saturday, March 29th, 9am - 3pm. This event offers tips and technical assistance on horse and small farm management options. See demos, attend presentations on composting, learn ways to reduce mud, see live animal displays, talk with vendors, and much more! King Country Fairgrounds in Enumclaw. ALL FREE! Contact Alison Nichols, WSU Cooperative Extension KC, at [Alison.Nichols@METROKC.GOV](mailto:Alison.Nichols@METROKC.GOV) or 206-205-3206.

Forestry Field Day - Saturday, April 5th, 10am - 3pm. Whether you have a few trees or a forest, come explore techniques and options for managing your forested lands. Learn about forest health, harvesting options, wildlife enhancement, resources and more! Murray Farm in Enumclaw. Contact Geoff Reed, King Conservation District, at [geoff.reed@kingcd.org](mailto:geoff.reed@kingcd.org) or 206-764-3410 x 103.



MRC Annual Meeting with Continuing Education Event Coming UP!

The 2003 Annual MRC meeting will take place on Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 -8:30 p.m. (dinner and mingling from 6:30-7:15 p.m.; speaker from 7:15 to 8:30 p.m.). This year's event will be held at the WSU-Cooperative

Extension office (Cougar Room), located at 919 SW Grady Way in Renton. Pizza will be provided for \$5 if you RSVP in advance, but feel free to bring a dish to share as a kitchen is available.

In addition to catching up with your fellow MRCs, this year's featured speaker will be Erv Sandlin from the King County Solid Waste Division, speaking on the inspiring LinkUp program. LinkUp provides free, hands-on and customized technical expertise and pro-

motional support to help Puget Sound area businesses incorporate more recycled materials into their products. To find out more about this program, visit this website: <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/linkup> Better yet, hear about it first hand at the annual meeting! Erv is an articulate and approachable speaker who is sure to inspire with his PowerPoint presentation that highlights local LinkUp partners and their successful efforts. Learn more about local companies that:

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# NEW GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAM!

**K**ing County's new Green Schools Program is a pilot program that will help schools improve or expand their conservation practices. The program is intended to help the participants become better stewards of the environment and ultimately models for their students and the community.

Each participating school will work on improvements in at least four of the eight categories listed below. Waste Reduction and Recycling will be required. Within each category, a school will set goals and decide what specific strategies will be used to reach its goals. Categories include:

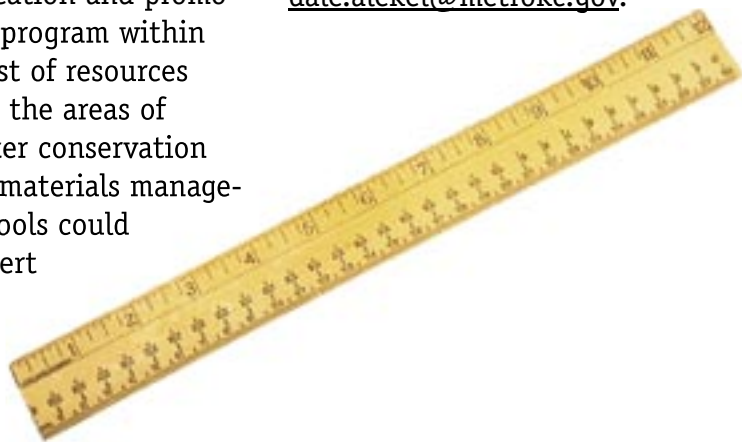
1. Waste Reduction and Recycling (includes composting)
2. Environmental Purchasing
3. Hazardous Materials Management and Reduction
4. Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
5. Water Conservation
6. Energy Conservation
7. Litter Reduction
8. Addressing Environmental Issues in the Classroom

Participating schools will sign a pledge form that provides details about the categories chosen and the goals for the program. The form will be signed by the principal, an administrator, any participating teachers, student body president or other student representing an environmental club or other group, and the custodian or janitor.

King County will provide assistance to each school to help meet its goals. Assistance will be tailored to each school. Depending upon the needs of each school, assistance could include: an assessment of current conservation practices; recommendations on goals and the strategies that will meet those goals; hands-on help to implement the selected strategies; education and promotion about the program within the school; a list of resources (particularly in the areas of energy and water conservation and hazardous materials management) that schools could contact for expert help and possibly funding; and supplies

deemed necessary to improve the school's environmental practices. (Examples of supplies include recycling containers and signs for recycling containers.)

Each school that signs a pledge form will receive a copy to display in the school building. Each school that follows through on its pledge and works toward reaching its goals and making changes to improve its conservation practices will be recognized as a "Green School." Schools are in the process of setting goals in their selected categories, and determining strategies to reach their goals by mid-February 2003. So far, Bellevue High School, Crestwood Elementary School (Covington), and Tolt Middle School (Carnation) have signed up to participate. For more information about the Green Schools Program, contact Dale Alekel at 206-296-8457 or [dale.alekel@metrokc.gov](mailto:dale.alekel@metrokc.gov).



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- recycle glass as an alternative sandblasting medium
  - create stylized, durable and functional chairs, benches, and tables from milk jugs and shampoo bottles
  - recycle glass in a custom-colored cement base to produce one-of-a-kind floor designs
  - make chair and sofa frames from wheatboard, a renewable agricultural by-product made from the straw portion of the wheat stalk and shelving and table tops from sunflower seed shells!
- All this and more at the MRC Annual Meeting on Febru-

ary 20<sup>th</sup> in Renton. Please RSVP by Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> with Darcy Batura at [darcy.batura@metrokc.gov](mailto:darcy.batura@metrokc.gov) or 206-205-3130. Note: If you haven't RSVP'ed but decide to come at the last minute, please do show up! Hope to see you there!

## RECYCLING GRANT HELPS KING COUNTY PARK VISITORS PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Visitors to Marymoor Park recycled enough plastic to save 3.08 barrels of oil -- or enough to light one house for eight months -- thanks to a new recycling effort. King County has honored nine dedicated Parks staff members for their help in recycling over 8,400 plastic bottles (10.2 cubic yards of material) since the recycling program began at Marymoor Park in July.

This effort was made possible by a \$5,000 grant from the National Association of PET (Polyethylene terephthalate) Container Recycling (NAPCOR), funds from Friends of Marymoor Park (FOMP), the Pepsi-Cola Company, and the King County Solid Waste Division. Nine King County Parks Division staff members offered in-kind contributions of time and labor. These hard-working staff members helped park users to recycle enough bottles to fill 60 33-gallon bags around Marymoor Park.

Upon receiving the grant, FOMP worked with the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks to arrange for the purchase, distribution, setup and placement of PETE's Big Bins to collect PET plastic bottles in Marymoor Park. After being in place for six months, FOMP's recycling program:

- improved visitor awareness and education of plastics recycling;
- reduced the cost of trash disposal, saving money for King County taxpayers;
- reduced the amount of waste going to the landfill and conserved resources;
- increased the visibility of plastics recycling; and
- offered a new service to King County Parks visitors.



Eighteen bins are currently on site at Marymoor. Six others will be placed in community centers and pools, such as the King County Aquatic Center, where the Parks Division would like to start collecting plastic bottles.

This effort is a good example of the new types of partnerships King

County is seeking as outlined in its new Parks business plan. The plan is a blueprint for transforming the existing parks system into one that embraces a broad new, entrepreneurial approach to doing business.

For more information about the awards ceremony or FOMP's recycling program, call Alexandra Scott at (206) 296-8454.

## HELP LAUNCH THE ONLINE EXCHANGE!

Help the Solid Waste Division launch a new online resource and clear out your basement or garage at the same time! There aren't many items listed on the Web site, and we would like to have entries in many of the categories before we promote the site county-wide. You can help increase the listings on this valuable Web resource and maybe put a few bucks in your pocket at the same time! Here are the details:

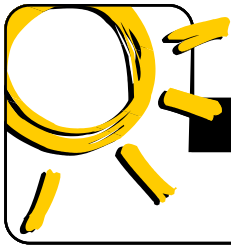
Located at:

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/exchange/>, the Online Exchange offers residents a quick, simple and free means of selling or giving away unwanted household goods. Categories include books, clothing, furniture, computer supplies, music, electronics and more. New categories will be added as demand grows. The Online Exchange offers residents an environmentally-friendly way to pass on items that are no longer needed.

The Online Exchange differs from many classified advertising resources in that the service is free to King County residents. Designed with simplicity in mind, visitors fill out a simple online registration form when listing an item for the first time, and are then issued a password on the spot.

Contact Jay Beach at (206) 296-4351 or [jay.beach@metrokc.gov](mailto:jay.beach@metrokc.gov) for more information.





## Master Recycler Composters In The Sun

*If you would like to highlight an MRC for a job well done, this is the place!  
Call the hotline with your nominations (206-343-8505).*

A graduate of the most recent 2002 MRC training, **Dirk Smith (Class #24)** has already completed 40 hours of outreach and more!! Dirk is an exceptionally enthusiastic and dedicated volunteer who is always fun to work with at events. Having composted for several years, Dirk brought much expertise to the training. However, he also knew

that there was a great deal left to learn in order to reduce waste successfully. Now Dirk enjoys sharing his knowledge at various KC events, especially those events where residents are excited to learn. Dirk has truly taken his own words of wisdom to heart—"be active and continue to learn." Always first with a smile, Dirk is a valuable asset to the MRC program – Thank You, Dirk!

The MRC Program would like to congratulate the following MRCs for reaching over 40 hours of volunteer outreach in the year 2002:

- **Suzanne Bagdon (Class 24)**
- **Falaah Jones (Class 24)**
- **Lesa Keller (Class 23)**
- **Maile Lono (Class 23)**
- **Dirk Smith (Class 24)**
- **Deborah Stuart (Class 23)**

SPECIAL RECOGNITION also goes out to those MRCs who reached over 100 outreach hours in 2002:

- **Sheila Parr (Class 23)**
- **Larry Waldron (Class 5)**

You are all stellar volunteers and your efforts are very much appreciated – THANK YOU!

## WHAT'S THE LATEST ON BATTERY TAKE-BACK POLICIES AND LOCATIONS IN KING COUNTY?

This is a common question heard at volunteer events and one you may be curious about yourself. The most up-to-date information on battery recycling in King County follows.

Currently, household alkaline batteries (A, C, D, 9v, etc) are not accepted for recycling at the Wastemobile or Factoria Locker. They can be placed in the trash for disposal. The Seattle Haz Sheds do accept alkaline batteries. Recycling opportunities are being investigated, but unfortunately, no cost-effective options are available at this time. However, the Wastemobile, Factoria Locker and Haz Sheds will accept lead-acid batteries that are used in cars.

PND Corporation in Bellevue accepts alkaline household batteries for a small fee (\$0.85 per pound). Please call first (425-562-7252) for availability and to find out the exact cost of this service.

Lithium batteries that are typically used in cameras are accepted by all the household hazardous waste collection facilities. Button batteries that are used in some watches, hearing aids, and other small items are also accepted.

Rechargeable batteries can be recycled through many retail outlets where they are purchased. The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) sponsors the collection and proper recycling of nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd), nickel metal hydride (Ni-MH), lithium ion (Li-ion) and small sealed lead (Pb). Visit their website [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org) for collection site locations near you.

For more information on local battery recycling opportunities and barriers, please visit:  
[www.metrokc.gov/health/hazard/batteries.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/hazard/batteries.htm).



# TEMPORARY VOLUNTEER COORDINATION/CONTACT CHANGE



Volunteer coordination services are currently under transition, so Karen May, MRC Project Manager, will be the temporary volunteer coordinator during January and February, rather than Nanda Blazej at Cascadia. You can continue to turn in volunteer hours and sign up for events through the MRC volunteer website. Calls to the MRC Hotline will be answered by Karen, until further notice. Feel free to contact Karen directly at 206-296-4353 or [karen.may@metrokc.gov](mailto:karen.may@metrokc.gov) if you have any questions or concerns. Thanks for your patience.

**Reminder:** *Tales* is available via Email or post mail. If you'd like to change the way you receive it, or have questions or concerns about the format or contents of this newsletter, give Karen a call.

## SWAP AND SAVE!

Please call the Hotline (206-343-8505) if you have any extra materials or if you are looking for something in particular. Your request and/or list of extra materials will appear in this section of the next MRC newsletter.

Janet Pierson (MRC Class #24) has a large wooden worm bin – less than a year old – that she would like to give away for free. Please call Janet at 425-482-0360 to arrange a time to pick it up.



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources & Parks

**Solid Waste Division**

Attn: Karen May

King Street Center

201 South Jackson St., Suite 700

Seattle, WA 98104-3855